

Kate Jellinghaus

Teaching Portfolio



Table of Contents

Teaching Philosophy 2-3

Art Projects 4-41

Artwork and Artist Statement 42-43





Philosophy of Teaching

If we accept that the creative act is the expansion of consciousness, then it follows that our role as teaching artists is to facilitate this expansion. As educators, we strive to open up space in our students' experience so that they connect personally to what they are doing and move to a new place of understanding and meaning.

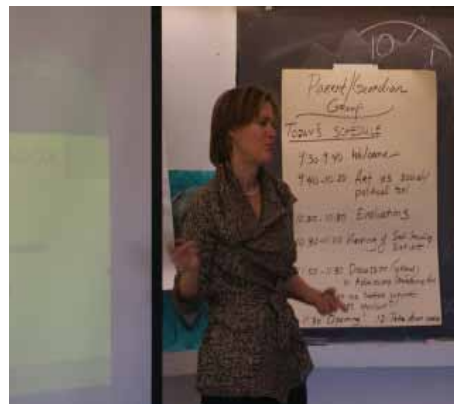
What is true of artists from all ages is that they travel in materials. Materials – be it clay, paint, wood, stone, film – spark the imagination, touch the spirit, engage the body – in a way that is physical, visceral, primal, direct. This immediacy of touch, of contact with materials, has allowed artists to speak visual 'truths' in a powerful, vibrant, language.

We as teaching artists need to give tools to young people so that they can become more abundantly creative – so that they can move and shift, get past their conscious mind and start making decisions IN the materials. Rather than focus on limited concepts like "how to make a successful painting", we should be helping them make a personal connection, help them experience real learning through moving into a realm when things move, change, and shift and become somehow alive and meaningful to them.

There is a universal draw to materials: people of all time and all place have made art, have put their imprint on walls, carved figures, made drawings. There is something basic and fundamental about this experience of wanting to create. It is rooted in our very physicality and our very being. And to discuss what it's about, words like "composition" are less useful in conveying the power of this experience than words like "rhythm," "movement" and "tension."

It seems to me that if we have only one art class to teach, then it should be mainly about this: how to create an atmosphere where students will feel the creative process as something alive, vital, important – where they will come out wanting to come back to the studio of their own accord, buy their own clay, take their own pictures, draw a picture of something important to them.

What is important in art, now as ever, is not so much originality



as authenticity. People have always made strange and wonderful things – how can we help our students enter into this realm whole-heartedly and with hope and enthusiasm?

One way is to talk about going local. There has been a lot of mention of going local when it comes to food. But, we can also talk about it in relationship to how to respond to where we are. How do we relate to the land around us? How do we feel about our environment? Our city? The land under our city? Many contemporary artists start with the idea of 'place' as a spring board for their creative process – whether it be Vija Celmin's ocean surfaces, Julie Mehretu's global cities, or Sally Mann's trees in the Deep South. There's an eloquence in nature that allows all kinds of things to open up.

Value of Visual Arts Education

While I have a deep love and respect for the forms of art, I believe that the visual arts have value far beyond the issues of formal art-making in the studio. The arts serve to broaden young people's sense of themselves – their sense of cultural and artistic identity and belonging. The arts inherently place value on culture, context and history. For young people who may have difficulty verbalizing feelings and ideas, the arts provide another avenue for communication: one that is powerful, direct and immediate. The arts also teach about nuance, subtlety of thought and critical thinking. Furthermore, in the creative process there exists an element of play which can serve as a catalyst for positive feelings, often enhancing students' willingness to learn. Finally, collaborative art-making often builds trust and fosters cooperation and healthy relationship.

In my own teaching, I start with the clear understanding that the young people I work with are extremely valuable and have a unique and important perspective on themselves and their communities, which can be contextualized constructively and forcefully through artmaking. I do not shy from dealing with sensitive issues (such as racism, abuse, love, violence, identity, environmentalism, or politics), understanding young people's need to express complex thoughts and emotions in a safe, constructive context. I believe structured artmaking fosters critical thinking and problem solving – skills that are crucial to young people's healthy development.



AP Art History RELAY

Can you run from the 13th to the 20th century?!



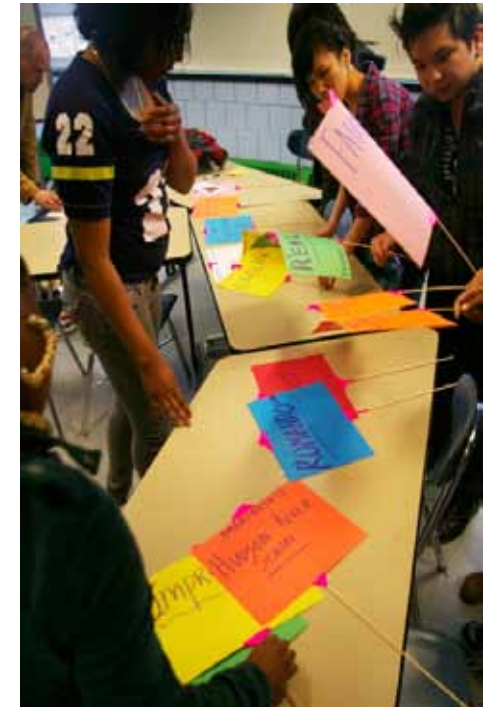
10 Charlestown High students, together with their teachers, ran a relay through time to help prepare for the AP Art History Exam.

We broke up into two teams and competed to see who could place all their flashcards in the right centuries, countries and periods! Starting in the Early Italian Renaissance with Giotto, we ran through Baroque, Romanticism, Realism, Impressionism – all the way into 20th century!

Charlestown High School is a Boston public school serving approximately 1,000 children, grades 9-12. The visual arts program is the only arts elective offered at the school. The school is racially mixed, with the large majority being students of color. This is the first time AP Art History has been offered at the school, and it was open to all students.

Themes for last 2 weeks before AP Exam -

1. Relay Running through the centuries, Giotto to Dali
2. Light and Shadow from the Caves to Hopper
3. The Figure in Stone
4. The Figure in Paint
- 5: Inner World / Outer World
6. Many Media
7. Gods and Heroes
- 8: Tombs and Temples
- 9: History and Art
- 10: Scavenger Hunt at the MFA



AP Art History YOGA and SCAVENGER HUNT

We twisted and turned like Titian, stood strong and smiled like an Archaic Greek, floated effortlessly like a Mannerist and let our Baroque arms fly wide.

AP Art History students at Charlestown High reviewed for their art history exam through doing Art History yoga and going on a scavenger hunt at the Museum of Fine Arts. Students understood and appreciated the different periods of art history by feeling the poses in their own bodies, and by looking at historical art first-hand. The scavenger hunt encouraged collaborative play as a way to review a large scope of material.

Charlestown High School is a Boston public school serving approximately 1,000 children, grades 9-12. The visual arts program is the only arts elective offered at the school. The school is racially mixed, with the large majority being students of color. This is the first time AP Art History has been offered at the school, and it was open to all students.



Some questions on the Scavenger Hunt -

1. Can you find the painting, in the same gallery with the Picasso, Kollwitz and Gauguin paintings, that shows "automatic drawing?" Who is the artist?
2. In the European painting gallery, what artist is positioned between the portraits by Rubens and El Greco?
3. In the New Kingdom Egyptian galleries, what painting technique is used to make the Roman Egyptian mummy portraits?
4. What is the title of the Van Gogh painting in the Impressionism gallery?
- 5: What are the names of the four figures around Christ in the medieval gallery?
6. In one of the relief carvings of Akhenaton, what is at the end of the sun rays?
7. In the Greek vase gallery, what Greek god is portrayed, surrounded by satyrs and grapevines?
- 8: In the Etruscan gallery, what do you call the stone coffins of a man and woman, embracing?



Haiti Printmaking and Quilting Project

Men Anpil Chay Pa Lou - Many Hands Make the Load Lighter

Over 60 Charlestown High art students and staff worked together to make two quilts to sell in order to raise money for a steel drum artist collective in Port Au Prince, Haiti, devastated by the earthquake. The quilts are intended to show our collective support of our brothers and sisters who are suffering in Haiti, by exploring imagery relating to Haitian art and culture. The embroidered texts are Haitian proverbs, written in Haitian Creole and in English translation.

The images and texts focus on our ability to aid in healing and reconstruction through collective action.: Men anpil chay pa lou - Many hands make the load lighter.

Charlestown High School is a Boston public school serving approximately 1,000 children, grades 9-12. The visual arts program is the only arts elective offered at the school. The school is racially mixed, with the large majority being students of color. There are over 50 Haitian students at Charlestown High, some of whom participated in the project.



Project Stages

1. Discussing situation in Haiti with Haitian staff
2. Drawing and design from Haitian steel drums
3. Transfer techniques and carving to a linoleum block
4. Printing on paper
- 5: Printing on fabric
6. Casting and painting a plaster tile, from linoleum block
7. Discussing work of artist Faith Ringgold
- 8: Embroidering fabric
- 9: Beading / Embellishing
- 10: Piecing the squares
- 11: Quilting
- 12: Exhibiting at Charlestown High, Wheelock College and Massachusetts College of Art, Spring 2010
- 13: Selling to raise money for Haiti



Haiti Printmaking to Painted Tiles



Over 60 Charlestown High art students and staff worked together to make two quilts to sell in order to raise money for a steel drum artist collective in Port Au Prince, Haiti, devastated by the earthquake. As a continuation of this project, students at Charlestown made low relief tiles, using their plates as a mold for plaster. These were painted with acrylics and given a glossy finish.

Charlestown High School is a Boston public school serving approximately 1,000 children, grades 9-12. The visual arts program is the only arts elective offered at the school. The school is racially mixed, with the large majority being students of color. There are over 50 Haitian students at Charlestown High, some of whom participated in the project.

Project Stages

1. Discussing situation in Haiti with Haitian staff
2. Drawing and design from Haitian steel drums
3. Transfer techniques and carving to a linoleum block
4. Printing on paper
- 5: Printing on fabric
6. Casting and painting a plaster tile, from linoleum block
7. Discussing work of artist Faith Ringgold
- 8: Embroidering fabric
- 9: Beading / Embellishing
- 10: Piecing the squares
- 11: Quilting
- 12: Exhibiting at Charlestown High, Wheelock College and Massachusetts College of Art, Spring 2010
- 13: Selling to raise money for Haiti



UBUNTU

Memory Vessels

UBUNTU (oo-BOON-too) is from the Bantu African languages and means - "I am because we are."

This project was made by over 25 girls, ages 13-17, in juvenile detention. The girls explored the idea of UBUNTU, through the creation of sculptural 'memory vessels'. The vessels are containers that each hold an idea, or part of a story, taking from our group storytelling. The small figures present the vessels, much like ancient votive statues. The girls are offering up their memories, valuing them and sharing them, as people do among friends.

The small scale of the figures (compared to the vessels) emphasizes the importance of memory and how we hold on to, preserve and cherish our memories - and the wisdom we gain from them.

Girls made this art through the program, **Artistic Noise, Boston**. The program provides the opportunity for participants to process and document their lives using the visual arts while learning valuable life and job skills. Through the creation of artwork exploring issues such as self-identity, hope, incarceration, and dreams- along with the exhibition and marketing of their artwork - the young people involved are empowered by - 1) following a complex project through to fruition; 2) having their voices heard through a visual medium; 3) participating in a collaborative project with their peers and facilitators.



Project Stages -

1. Brainstorming on meaning of Ubuntu
2. Imagining symbols for Ubuntu
3. Telling and recording our own stories
4. Listening to each other's stories.
5. Discussing contemporary artist Do-Ho Suh's "Public Monument"
5. Constructing vessels with papier mache.
6. Designing our vessels with text from our stories.
7. Painting and adding imagery.
8. Discussing connection between ancient African and 20th c. sculpture.
9. Designing, sculpting and painting the figures for the vessels.
10. Assessing the project.
- 11.. Exhibiting at Wheelock College, Massachusetts State House, and Urbano, Spring 2010



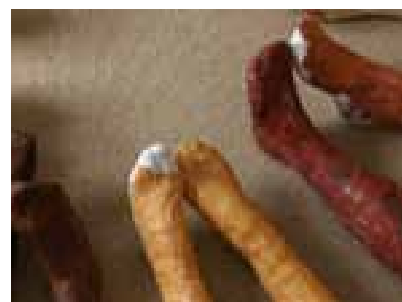
STORY CIRCLE

Collaborative Sculpture and Sound Installation

DESCRIPTION

Girls built a large-scale collaborative sculpture using casts of their legs and feet. The casts were paper-mached in different skin colors, representing individuality, and placed in a circle, representing larger community. This "story circle" became the physical forum for personal recordings: Girls made recordings of favorite songs, stories, raps, and poetry. When you approach the circle, you can hear and share in their experiences.

Girls made this art through the program, **Artistic Noise, Boston**. The program provides the opportunity for participants to process and document their lives using the visual arts while learning valuable life and job skills. Through the creation of artwork exploring issues such as self-identity, hope, incarceration, and dreams— along with the exhibition and marketing of their artwork – the young people involved are empowered by – 1) following a complex project through to fruition; 2) having their voices heard through a visual medium; 3) participating in a collaborative project with their peers and facilitators.



SEVERAL ARTIST STATEMENTS

"I recorded real life and what I see on a daily basis. When I sing (the song) 'Why?' I sing about hurt, and when I rap, I rap about the hood life." –Jailah, age 14

"I recorded 'Love Hurts' and 'Daddy's Little Girl'. 'Love Hurts' is about two people who thought they loved each other, but don't. 'Daddy's Little Girl' is about a little girl (whose) dad is going to get a divorce with her mom." –Karyna, age 14

"I recorded 'I Wished You Loved Me' with Shicora because I really love this song. Singing to me means a moment when you're being inspired by someone and you want a shot at being somebody, when you have talent. It's nothing like being happy because you're actually doing something you really, really like to do." –Tratasia, age 16

"I sang 'Weak' – it's an old school song. The reason I like to sing is because it makes me happy and I'm at peace. I want to be a singer because not a lot of singers are from Boston, and I want my city to be known, and everytime they think of Boston, they think of me." –Skilar, age 16



Alternative Doorways

Monumental Sculpture Installation, Alternatives to Metal Detectors

Over 40 Charlestown High students envisioned alternatives to the the metal detectors that they walk through when they enter the school each morning.

Students worked in teams to design symbolic doorways that express how they would want to feel (and others to feel) as they enter the school. The doorways reflect their ideas about school, values, profanity, community, diversity, adversity, prayer, travel and celebration. Some of the titles are: *Rise Above the System*, *Going Around The World*, *Positivity*, *God's Eye*, *Better Life*, *No Profanity at School and Celebration*.

These were installed in the lobby of the school, like a tunnel, for students to enjoy, along with the design team statements.

Charlestown High School is a Boston public school serving approximately 1,000 children, grades 9-12. The visual arts program is the only arts elective offered at the school. The school is racially mixed, with the large majority being students of color.



Project Stages -

1. Introducing idea of monumental art
2. Discussing contemporary artist Christo's *Gates*
3. Writing a reflection on school climate, including metal detectors
4. Designing a gate out of one piece of paper, no glue or tape
5. Measuring metal detector and planning materials
6. Building a viable structure
7. Connecting form and function to symbolism of idea
- 8: Developing meaning and choosing materials for embellishment
- 9: Articulating artist intention
- 10: Making black silhouette icons
- 11: Installing
- 12: Exhibiting at Charlestown High School and MassArt
- 13: Writing assessment



Ancient Animals

How were animals depicted in the Ancient world?

How can we make our own animal art, inspired by ancient forms?

Students at Boston Arts Academy looked to Persian animal vessels, Egyptian mummies, Byzantine icons and Hindu deities to make their own artwork on the theme of animals. Their projects explored both animal anatomy and ancient art history, with a focus on the making.

Boston Arts Academy is a pilot school for the arts in the Boston public school system. Boston Arts Academy. Boston Arts Academy is the city's first and only high school for the visual and performing arts. It was founded on the conviction that academics and the arts are equally important to student development and achievement. BAA is committed to providing a rigorous arts and academic education to urban youth who seldom have the opportunity to focus on the arts. It serves 405 students, who study dance, theater, music and visual arts.



Project Stages -

1. Looking at slides of ancient animal art and drawing from them
2. Studying animal anatomy, and applying this knowledge to ancient art
3. Visiting the Museum of Fine Arts and studying ancient animal forms
4. Discussing ancient Persian vessels and their use of animals
5. Designing our own vessel in clay, inspired by a particular culture
6. Reviewing our work through peer and group critiques



Deep Space Cloud Drawings

Can you create a deep sense of space
and magical sense of sky on a flat page?

Students at Boston Arts Academy drew deep space sky drawings. They explored different techniques of mixing soft vine and compressed charcoal to make strong drawings of deep space. They learned how to create a sense of atmospheric perspective and to play with scale. They were flooded with photographic images of skies, to give them reference material. They were also introduced to the contemporary artist, Vija Celmins.

Boston Arts Academy is a pilot school for the arts in the Boston public school system. Boston Arts Academy is the city's first and only high school for the visual and performing arts. It was founded on the conviction that academics and the arts are equally important to student development and achievement. BAA is committed to providing a rigorous arts and academic education to urban youth who seldom have the opportunity to focus on the arts. It serves 405 students, who study dance, theater, music and visual arts.



This is a "I do it – You do it" exercise.
It also involves "I challenge -You wrestle."



Landscape and Still Life Painting



Students at Boston Arts Academy painted landscapes and still lifes in acrylic and mixed media collage. Students worked from photo and slide references, made thumbnail sketches and drew from their imagination.

Emphasis was placed on exploring the painting process through working large and physically, painting from the shoulder and working the materials with rigor. Students discussed the emotionality of color and explored how color creates space. Students were introduced to the work of Romare Beardon and were taught collage painting techniques.

Boston Arts Academy is a pilot school for the arts in the Boston public school system. Boston Arts Academy. Boston Arts Academy is the city's first and only high school for the visual and performing arts. It was founded on the conviction that academics and the arts are equally important to student development and achievement. BAA is committed to providing a rigorous arts and academic education to urban youth who seldom have the opportunity to focus on the arts. It serves 405 students, who study dance, theater, music and visual arts.



Thumbnail sketches before painting



Self Portrait and Still Life Painting 2

Students at Boston Arts Academy painted self portraits and still lifes in acrylic and mixed media collage. Students worked from mirrors, photographs, still lifes and their imagination.

Emphasis was placed on exploring the painting process through working large and physically, painting from the shoulder and working the materials with rigor. Students discussed the emotionality of color and explored how color creates space. They also reviewed basic human anatomy.

Boston Arts Academy is a pilot school for the arts in the Boston public school system. Boston Arts Academy. Boston Arts Academy is the city's first and only high school for the visual and performing arts. It was founded on the conviction that academics and the arts are equally important to student development and achievement. BAA is committed to providing a rigorous arts and academic education to urban youth who seldom have the opportunity to focus on the arts. It serves 405 students, who study dance, theater, music and visual arts.



Ghana Think Tank

What are your problems? What are your solutions?

The GhanaThinkTank Project was created by Matey Odonkor, John Ewing and Christopher Robbins. Carmen Montoya joined the project in 2009. Kate Jellinghaus implemented an off-shoot of the ThinkTank project, with girls in juvenile lockup in Dorchester, MA, and students at The Taft School in Watertown CT, in 2009.

DESCRIPTION

The Ghana ThinkTank is a worldwide network of think tanks creating strategies to resolve local problems in the “developed” world. The network began with think tanks from Ghana, Cuba and El Salvador, and has since expanded to include Serbia, Mexico and Ethiopia. In our most recent project, we sent problems collected in Wales to think tanks in Ghana, Mexico, Serbia, Iran, and a group of incarcerated girls in the U.S. Prison system.

These think tanks analyze the problems and propose solutions, which we put into action back in the community where the problems originated – whether those solutions seem impractical or brilliant. In the past, some solutions have struck us as embarrassing or even offensive, but we’ve also been struck by the poetic nature of some solutions, and the realization that change can come from unexpected places.

Once the actions are completed, we send the results back to the think tanks, initiating another round of social dialogue. By applying a typical process of community development against the grain, traditional power-roles are inverted, places are exchanged, and stereotypes clash with reality as disconnected cultures work together in detached but physical ways.



Project Stages -

1. Visiting girls in juvenile lockup. Explaining the idea of a thinktank
2. Presenting girls with list of problems of people in Wales, England
3. Taping our official thinktank discussion in which we brainstorm solutions for people in Wales (These solutions were then implemented by artists in Wales.)
4. Coming up with our own list of problems (of girls in juvenile detention), to be discussed by students at Taft
5. Setting up and taping the Taft thinktanks
6. Building a monumental sculpture, to present all the videotaped material to the audience at Taft
7. Offering the solutions to girls in lockup for consideration



Foundation Drawing I



Drawing I is a comprehensive course in objective drawing using various media. Concentrating on the formal elements of line, shape, value texture and (limited) color in images drawn from observation, students focus on figure/ground relationships, relative position and proportion, perspective, and light in relation to volume. Throughout the course, students engage with compositional issues, historic and contemporary references, and are expected to find personal solutions to set problems

Montserrat College of Art is an independent institution of art, providing an intensive visual arts education in art and design. The college has degree, diploma and community-based programs and is located on the North Shore, in Beverly, Massachusetts. The college serves 340 undergraduate students, has 9 studio concentrations and 63 faculty members.

"Drawing offers us the most extraordinary range of possibilities: it is a map of time recording the actions of the maker." - Emma Dexter, *Vitamin D*



3-D Design

Sculpture with an eye to history



Sculpture exists in the same light that we do.

Project Stages:

- 1. Studying ancient architectural forms*
- 2. Drawing from slides and considering the relationship of form to function*
- 3. Playing with materials to consider possible hybrids*
- 4. Making a paper mock-up, with no glue or tape*
- 5. Designing a shrine or temple, using paper, cardboard, plaster, or clay*
- 6. Writing an artist's statement about meaning of structure*



Students at Montserrat College of Art and Boston Arts Academy experimented in 3-D design work. Students in Art History I at Montserrat designed temples that were hybrids of ancient architectural forms, while students at Boston Arts Academy designed personal shrines, inspired by ancient architectural forms.

SEARCH

Figure Drawing

Drawing for understanding through exploring relationships

"I don't draw things, I draw the relationships between things."
-Henri Matisse

Students at Montserrat understood and appreciated the value of rigorous 'searching' while drawing the figure from life. Students are taught to draw to understand, not to depict, when working from observation.

Montserrat College of Art is an independent institution of art, providing an intensive visual arts education in art and design. The college has degree, diploma and community-based programs and is located on the North Shore, in Beverly, Massachusetts. The college serves 340 undergraduate students, has 9 studio concentrations and 63 faculty members. Figure drawing is taught both at the Foundation and advanced levels.



Project Stages -

1. Discussing search drawing and drawing for understanding
2. Setting an art historical context for drawing from the figure
3. Analyzing work by figurative artists, past and present
4. Developing a studio work ethic of humility and rigor
5. Searching for relationships from the model
6. Analyzing progress through critiques, peer and group
7. Intensive drawing for understanding from model.



Paul Klee on drawing:

"Drawing is an active line on a walk, moving freely, without a goal. A walk for a walk's sake. The mobility agent is a point, shifting its position forward."

Anatomical Figure

Designing a two-foot anatomical figure in clay, from wire armature to core skeletal structures to muscular form

Issues of proportionality, balance, weight shift, anatomical form and function

Anatomy students at Montserrat built 2-foot anatomical figures in clay, exploring the essential proportions, forms and functions of human anatomy. Working from reference books and live models, they each chose their own unique pose for their model, which included the weight falling on one leg and torsion of the torso. This month-long project includes multiple peer and individual critiques and student assessment.

Montserrat College of Art is an independent institution of art, providing an intensive visual arts education in art and design. The college has degree, diploma and community-based programs and is located on the North Shore, in Beverly, Massachusetts. The college serves 340 undergraduate students, has 9 studio concentrations and 63 faculty members. Perspectives in Anatomy is offered for sophomores through seniors, and is a prerequisite for a degree in Illustration.



Project Stages -

1. Drawing from nude model, analyzing balance and motion
2. Building a wire armature, choosing gender and stance
3. Studying and drawing from anatomical sources
4. Designing pose: proportionality, torsion, weight shift, balance
5. Building core structures
6. Working with nude model: sightsizing
7. Constructing skeletal form
8. Layering muscles, as they relate to skeletal form
9. Peer work and self-evaluations of process
10. Revisiting subcutaneous points
11. Evaluation process, working with nude model
12. Final assessment and evaluation



HUMAN ANATOMY

Final Projects:

Students investigate and apply their understanding of human anatomy to a medium of choice.

Students at Montserrat complete a final series of artwork on the subject of human anatomy in a medium of choice. Using digital painting, stop-motion photography, illustration techniques, photography, casting, carving, etc., students develop a body of work that shows a rigorous investigation of human anatomy as it applies to their own studio work.

Montserrat College of Art is an independent institution of art, providing an intensive visual arts education in art and design. The college has degree, diploma and community-based programs and is located on the North Shore, in Beverly, Massachusetts. The college serves 340 undergraduate students, has 9 studio concentrations and 63 faculty members.



Project Stages -

1. Establishing criteria for assessment of work
2. Discussing work of previous anatomy students
3. Developing ideas through research and studio practice
4. Creating a body of work in medium of choice
5. Presentation and Group Critique
6. Documentation of work



The Power of PLACE

How can we understand art, whether historical or contemporary, in more expansive and meaningful ways?

Parent / Guardian Group -
Free class for adult learners

In this set of eight classes, students learned to think in more expansive and exciting ways about art and its context. We engaged in hands-on studio art explorations in painting, drawing and mixed media.

This topic used place as a starting point for better understanding art in context. It is an important topic, because it addresses issues like the relationship between geography and art, between land and the forms we envision, and between our inner and outer realities. It touches upon differences between urban and rural culture, issues of class and race, starting however with larger contexts - contexts of land, environment, nature, organic form - and explores how man-made and natural elements (elements of place) enter the process of art making by challenging and inspiring artists of all time.



8 Session Summary

The 8 sessions include hands-on experiences in the art studio, as well as group trips to local museums, engaged discussion, films on contemporary artists, a session on 'understanding and support for your art student', and a look at social and political art.

- 1 Local neighborhood – Global city
- 2 Outer world – Inner World
- 3 Place and Art in the Ancient Mind
- 4 Changing Perspectives
- 5 Lands and Wounds: Narrative in Photography
- 6 Figure and Place
- 7 Object as Icon
- 8 Art in a Global Culture



Elementary Art

Maracas, Volcanoes, Animal Creations and Protest Drawings!



Kids aged 6-13 in Dorchester and Mattapan spent the summer painting landscapes, designing animal sculptures and masks, and making their own rhythms with maracas! The children also protested the possible closure of the Franklin Park Zoo through making animal protest drawings.

B-Safe is a summer program in Boston run through St. Stephen's Episcopal church. Operating in six sites across the inner city, it offers affordable academic and enrichment activities for hundreds of elementary school children.



New Forest: Moving Out. Oil on Beeswaxed paper. 30" x 44". 2009

Artist Statement

Individual Studio Practice

I studied painting for six years at the National Academy of Art in Sofia, Bulgaria. The painting program had a strong formal and figurative focus (including daily work from nude models) a studio practice which allowed for a thorough investigation of form, structure, color, composition, anatomy, technique, etc. in painting, sculpture and drawing. This more "traditional" arts education gave me a respect for the formal aspects of art making – an understanding I continue to carry into my own practice and which gives me a solid studio foundation.

"Formal" searching in my own painting does not imply for me detachment, but rather rigorous engagement. I believe in drawing in such a way that I am physically engaged, thinking in and through the materials. My work sometimes tends towards the figurative, sometimes towards the abstract, though these terms are not as important to me as my underlying sense of integrity in what I am doing. I believe that powerful work can come from a searching in materials this is both honest / accountable and empathetic. I do not work strictly from observation, however do derive inspiration from nature, landscape and figure.



High Noon. Digital photograph. Part of Bulgarian Photo Project, 2007.

Collaborative Practice

As an artist and educator, I have been interested in creating innovative ways to develop art projects that are interdisciplinary and collaborative and speak to the pressing social and environmental issues young people face, while simultaneously giving them the chance to experience the joy of creating through hands-on visual play. Several of these projects have allowed me to participate as an artist myself, both in the design and execution of the project. In so doing, I have expanded my own sense of art and the value of collaborative process. These works include video art, fabric art and photography, and address issues of identity, community and place.